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LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith (see annex) a copy of the letter of Zivadin Jovanovic, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, on 3 April 1999 concerning the humanitarian situation in Yugoslavia following the aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against my country.

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

99-09512 (E) 050499

Annex

Letter dated 3 April 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

I have carefully read your letter of 25 March 1999. Unfortunately, in its tone and approach it is no different from your previous views and those of other Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) officials, despite the fact that it was written at the height of brutal aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Thousands of tons of NATO and United States bombs and explosives have been thrown, since the beginning of the aggression, on 24 March, on towns, villages, refugee camps, cultural and historical monuments, religious shrines, schools, hospitals, bridges, factories and other civilian targets across Yugoslavia. All of this, in addition to extensive material destruction, caused many innocent civilian casualties. The aggression of NATO and the United States of America has been coupled with fabrication of lies and an unprecedented anti-Yugoslav campaign, particularly concerning the alleged "humanitarian catastrophe", with a view to misleading the international public and drawing the conclusions that correspond to the aggressor's goals.

The NATO aggressor has projected a humanitarian catastrophe and managed with its bombs and missiles to produce one, in order to now take advantage of the columns of refugees from Kosovo and Metohija, a consequence of the aggression, in the international public as a justification for the crimes and further expansion of the aggression, threatening with new victims. NATO bombs are not selective - they equally tragically endangered and still endanger all citizens - Serbs, Montenegrins, Albanians, Muslims, Romanies, Turks, Goranies, Egyptians.

I should like to inform you that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, on 31 March, called on all citizens of Kosovo and Metohija, especially Kosmet Albanians, not to leave their homes, least of all their State, despite NATO air strikes against civilian targets, to sympathize with others in need and to help each other and the country to defend themselves against the NATO aggression. Those who have been displaced in the wake of the aggression receive Government humanitarian assistance. Inside the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia no one encourages displacement. People are seeking refuge for fear of an inevitable death facing them for the last nine days. The victims and plight of the population have dramatically increased with the daily escalation of bombing raids against towns and villages. Particularly devastating and tragic are the consequences of NATO missile attacks in downtown areas of large cities such as Belgrade, Priština, Novi Sad, Čačak and many others.

The NATO attacks concentrate on provoking a humanitarian catastrophe and the largest human tragedy unprecedented in all of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia territory. Over the last few days, NATO forces have also bombed ethnically pure Albanian villages so as to provoke the stampede of refugees and

aggravate the humanitarian catastrophe and thus win the support for the widening of the criminal aggression. In the city of Novi Sad, they have destroyed a regional water system supplying 600,000 people with running water. NATO bombs have so far hit two shelters housing refugees from Bosnia and Croatia, several hospitals, over 100 schools, a great many cultural monuments and places of worship, telephone lines and other communications, private homes, farms, pharmaceutical plants, etc. In a refugee centre in Kuršumlija alone, 11 refugees have been killed. The destruction of chemical storages and other chemical industrial facilities in Pančevo, Belgrade, Priština and other places has endangered the environment.

I therefore call on you and expect you, Madam Ogata, to condemn the aggression as a crime against peace and humanity. In these dramatic moments, it is necessary to join our efforts to provide all the assistance needed to all refugees and all those displaced by the senseless NATO aggression, in and outside the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. This also stems from the noble objectives of UNHCR as well as from the agreement between the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and your organization that should be reaffirmed and lived up to precisely at this moment.

(Signed) Živadin JOVANOVIĆ